

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

by Pere Lagrange

Volume II - Chapter 5

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Volume II The Gospel of Jesus Christ by Pere M. - J. Lagrange, O.P

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The Last Preaching of Jesus At Jerusalem

Jesus left Ephraim before the feast of the Pasch. St. John does not say explicitly that He went down from there to Jericho, but that is suggested. He makes Jesus come to Bethany six days before the feast; but to travel from Taiybeh to Bethany it is necessary to pass either very close to Jerusalem or else through Jericho. The first route is shorter. But we learn, also from St. John, that Jesus did not make His entry into Jerusalem until after His visit to Bethany ; and as a close watch was kept on Him, it would not have

been possible for Him to reach the Mount of Olives so surreptitiously as not to be seen. In this case again, we find a real harmony between St. John and the Synoptists, concealed beneath what looks like disagreement to those who follow the itinerary of the Gospel journeys without taking the lie of the land into account. The only road from Ephraim to Jericho descends through Ain-Duk, and as Jesus went down that way the shadow of the Passion was already beginning to envelop Him. Soon after His arrival in the plain of Jericho He began the ascent to Jerusalem, one of the episodes of which was the triumph of Palm Sunday.

I. THE LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

The third prediction of the Passion and Resurrection (223).

A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

31 And taking the twelve, he said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. **32** For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; **33** they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise." **34** But they understood none of these things; this saying was hid from them, and they did not grasp what was said. Luke xviii, 31-34

A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

32 And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, **33** saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; **34** and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." Mark x, 32-34

A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, **18** "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, **19** and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day." Matthew xx, 17-19.

(The three Synoptists are in perfect agreement. Luke merely adds that the Apostles fail to understand. We follow Mark, whose account is the most detailed.)

We see Jesus, therefore, making His way through the Jordan valley which is wide enough to form a great plain. Westward arise precipitously the lofty hills forming the lowest of the three stages on the way up to Jerusalem, which ([Page 109](#)) dominates them all. He has just seemed to run away from the threats of the Jews, but now He is making for the road which climbs from Jericho up the first slopes of these hills. He walks in front like a resolute leader. Those nearest to Him, His Apostles, are amazed ; there are others who still follow Him, but they are beginning to be afraid. Then the Master, counting only on His most faithful disciples, calls the Twelve to Him in order to encourage them beforehand with words they are to remember afterwards, showing them that glory will follow trial. He foretells that He is to be delivered up to the chief priests and doctors of the Law, to be ill-treated by them, condemned to death, handed over to the Gentiles who will mock Him, spit upon Him, scourge Him, and put Him to death. But afterwards comes the certain promise of the Resurrection, in preparation for which it was necessary to endure these sufferings described in detail and to pass through these hours of darkness ; for the Resurrection was a shining goal only to be reached after three grievous days of waiting. The Apostles do not understand Him. Why did not God manifest the Messiah in His glory from the very first?

The sort of ambition to be looked for in those who desire to reign with Jesus (224).

The Request of James and John

35 And James and John, the sons of Zeb'edee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." **36** And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" **37** And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." **38** But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" **39** And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; **40** but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." **41** And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. Mark x, 35-41

The Request of the Mother of James and John

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. **21** And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." **22** But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." **23** He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." **24** And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers.
Matthew xx, 20-24.

Among those now following Jesus were certain courageous women of Galilee, who supplied by their attentions for the indifference with which He regarded His own material comfort. There is less pessimism in women, especially if they be mothers, than in men. The light of promise they see in the faces of their sons makes mothers ready to brave any danger. The mother of the sons of Zebedee, probably the woman named Salome, took a bold step when she saw Jesus walking ahead so resolutely. She decided to ask Him now to promise that He would give her sons the two chief places in His kingdom. She knows that this is what they desire, and she is only too glad to be their mouthpiece. She ([Page 110](#))

(This is Matthew's account. According to Mark it is the sons themselves who make the request. The wish was certainly their own, but that they should have got their mother to voice it for them is a very natural circumstance that Matthew had no reason for inventing.)

approaches Jesus, therefore, and imagining Him already on His messianic throne she falls down at His feet, thus clearly showing that she has a favor to ask. 'What wilt thou?' Jesus asks. She has her answer ready : 'Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom.' But Jesus sees through the clever subterfuge of the two brothers, and His answer is addressed to them: 'You know not what you ask.'

Had they not heard, or had they not understood what He had just told them, namely, that He Himself would enter into His glory only after He had suffered? Was it fitting that they should ask for places at His side in glory if they were not ready to share His lot, even in death? He compares His sufferings and death to a cup of bitterness that He must drink,

We do not see our signs;
there is no longer any prophet,

and there is none among us who knows how long. Psalm 74: 9

17

Rouse yourself, rouse yourself,
stand up, O Jerusalem,
you who have drunk at the hand of the Lord
the cup of his wrath,
who have drunk to the dregs
the bowl of staggering.

18

There is none to guide her
among all the sons she has borne;
there is none to take her by the hand
among all the sons she has brought up.

19

These two things have befallen you—
who will condole with you?—
devastation and destruction, famine and sword;
who will comfort you?^[c]

20

Your sons have fainted,
they lie at the head of every street
like an antelope in a net;
they are full of the wrath of the Lord,
the rebuke of your God.

21

Therefore hear this, you who are afflicted,
who are drunk, but not with wine:

22

Thus says your Lord, the Lord,
your God who pleads the cause of his people:

“Behold, I have taken from your hand

the cup of staggering;

the bowl of my wrath

you shall drink no more;

Isaias 51, 17-22

21

Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
dweller in the land of Uz;

but to you also the cup shall pass;

you shall become drunk and strip yourself bare. Lamentations 4: 21

31 You have gone the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand.
Ezechiel 23: 31

as well as to deep water into which He must be plunged.

(To be baptized, i.e. plunged, in misfortune, is a common expression in profane writers. Mark alone adds this, but it is certainly authentic.)

The two brothers, whom He had previously named the Sons of Thunder,

17 James the son of Zeb'edee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Bo-aner'ges, that is, sons of thunder; Mark 3: 17

are attentive only to the voice of their heart, and reply: ‘We can.’ Jesus accepts this assurance of their fidelity : ‘ You shall indeed drink of the chalice that I drink of, and with the baptism wherewith I am baptized you shall be baptized.’ Assuredly, they will be rewarded for this suffering ; but it is not for the Son of God, in His role of Messiah, to allot places at His right hand and His left : that belongs to the Father. Doubtless the two

brothers drew no clear distinction between the kingdom the Messiah was to found on earth, which was in a special way His kingdom,

41 The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, Matthew 13:41

and the kingdom of the elect which belonged to the Father. Their minds ran on the thought of glory. Now glory meant a state of beatitude with God, where Jesus too would reign ; but the degrees of blessedness in God's kingdom were determined by His eternal decree.

Thus did Jesus turn aside the request of the two brothers without either admitting or rejecting it, for the intentions of His Father were not to be disclosed. Their earthly destiny, however, He unfolded to them : they were to be admitted to a share in their Master's sufferings. In what degree was this to be fulfilled ? The answer to this was made clear in ([Page111](#)) the case of James, the elder of the brothers, who was beheaded by Herod Agrippa

Acts 12: 2

a few years after the death of Jesus, in the year 44. But ancient tradition held it for certain that John had ended his life by a natural death. Nevertheless, his banishment to Patmos was a very severe hardship for his Master's sake, Tertullian believed also that he had been lunged into a cauldron of boiling oil by order of Domitian.

Others again declared that he had drunk of a poisoned cup without any evil result.

Leucius Charinus in the Acta Fohannis, 9

But these traditions apart, it may still be said that the metaphor of the cup and baptism is vague enough to be understood of a long life spent in the apostolate, a life, therefore, of labor, suffering, and persecution. Some modern writers, however, are so exacting that they insist on reading into Mark's text the conviction that the two brothers had suffered death by martyrdom at the time when the evangelist wrote. This is an ingenious way of depriving John, the son of Zebedee, of the authorship of the fourth gospel; but it will not stand against the constant tradition. And is it only in this case that we are to interpret the figurative expressions of the gospel with such rigour?

(An article by the Rev. J. H. Bernard in the Journal of Theological Studies, 1927, April, pp. 262 ff., shows that the first of the two metaphors may refer to death, but not the second ; also that the idea of baptism by blood is a later and derived notion within the Church, dating only from the time of Origen.)

The other ten Apostles certainly did not understand the prediction of Jesus in so tragic a manner. They were much less struck by the courageous fidelity of the two sons of Zebedee than by their ambition. Far from pitying them, they were indignant ;

(This only too human feature is in St. Matthew's account also: hence it cannot be said that he has put the mother forward in order to spare the Apostles.)

so much more ready were they to turn their imagination to the glory of the Messiah than to His sufferings. The mother of the two sons had wanted to speak to Jesus confidentially, but the others had heard everything from a distance. The Master now makes them come near that He may give them all the lesson which is called for by the leaning they all have towards ambition, a lesson which was rendered all the more opportune by their persistent misunderstanding of the part He was to play as the Messiah. (Page 112)

Jesus has come to give His life as a ransom (257).

42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. **43** But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, **44** and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. **45** For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10: 42-45 ;

25 But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. **26** It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, **27** and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; **28** even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20: 25-28;

25 And he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. **26** But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves.

30 that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Luke 22: 25-26, 30b.

(These texts of St. Luke are to be found in No. 257 of the Synopsis amongst the discourses delivered at the Last Supper. But it seems to us now preferable to regard them as an instruction given to the disciples after the inopportune request of the mother of James and John. As Luke, however, had not mentioned this incident he put this instruction along with that given at the Last Supper. There is good reason, then, for transferring Luke xxii, 25-26, 30b, to this place.)

Then Jesus said to the Twelve gathered around Him: 'They that are in positions of command over the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones exercise authority over the people. But it is not so among you.'

42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. **43** But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, **44** and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. **45** For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus

46 And they came to Jericho; and as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great multitude, Bartimae'us, a blind beggar, the son of Timae'us, was sitting by the roadside. **47** And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" **48** And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **49** And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; rise, he is calling you." **50** And throwing off his mantle he sprang up and came to Jesus. **51** And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Master,^[a] let me receive my sight." **52** And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way. Mark 10:42,f

They ought not to desire to be amongst the great and the foremost, and even if they have to perform functions of authority for the common good, they must act in reality as the servants of all. Amongst Christians, indeed, he who is called to rule must act boldly as leader ; but he will only be accepted as leader if it is realized that he does in truth humble himself beneath everyone. Hence the title chosen for the Roman Pontiff, who is the chief pastor, is ' Servant of the servants of God.' And the motive in all this must be the desire to imitate the Son of Man, who came not to be served but to serve. Before

He came the word 'serve' had an ill repute, but it has taken on a noble signification on account of His example. Then He proceeds to show them what is the inward motive of His own loving self-abasement, the hour for which has now arrived : the Son of Man was come to serve and to give His soul, that is to say, His life, as a ransom on behalf of many. This is what the Good Shepherd had already said of the laying down of His life for His sheep.

15 as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. **John 10: 15**

What did Jesus mean here? His words are obscure if we try to apply each one of them directly to Him. The 'many' in question seem to stand for the human race which is delivered by one man. But was humanity held captive? By whom? To whom was the ransom to be paid, and in what sense can the death of Jesus be regarded as the payment of a ransom? Early commentators occupied themselves with the solution of such questions as these, sometimes going beyond the bounds of what is strictly legitimate in the application of this parabolic saying to the Redemption.'

(Some have imagined that the ransom was paid to the devil, and so on.) (Page 113)

Those to whom Jesus spoke gathered this much, at least : that He was comparing Himself to a servant intensely devoted to his master who was condemned to die if no one was found willing to die for him, and the servant gladly offers his own life as a ransom. He, the Son of Man, who had condescended to live among them like one of themselves in the guise of a servant, was offering His life not for a single person, however, but for all mankind. He was willing to die for them, and in a certain sense instead of them. God accepted that sacrifice for the salvation of men, offered possibly out of the greatest love that could be conceived. Such a thing was enough to inspire souls to love One who has loved us so much, to love other men too and devote our energies to the service of our neighbor in imitation of Him, serving them out of charity.

St. Paul, as we know, devoted much attention to the development of this dogma of the redeeming death of Christ. We see here how he drew his inspiration from the teaching. It would be idle to object that this teaching is of Jesus. merely a trace of the Paulinism that has crept into the gospels. On the contrary, it is another example of the manner in which it was Jesus' custom to teach, taking a doctrine of salvation and hiding it, like a fertile seed, beneath that parabolic form of instruction which He adopted for His use. In the gospel of St. John we find that doctrine in the allegory of the Good Shepherd giving His life for His sheep ; in St. Matthew and St. Mark it is contained in the parable of the

servant who gives his life for his master. The figures are different, but the revelation is the same. In the fourth gospel, as in the two Synoptists, Jesus holds back this revelation until He is near His Passion. He has often declared that He must suffer and die; now, at last, He explains that He accepts death for the salvation of mankind.

In the neighbourhood of Jericho. The cure of Bartimeus and another blind man (225).

Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar Near Jericho

35 As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; **36** and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. **37** They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." **38** And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" **39** And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **40** And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, **41** "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." **42** And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." **43** And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Luke 18: 35-43

The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus

46 And they came to Jericho; and as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great multitude, Bartimae'us, a blind beggar, the son of Timae'us, was sitting by the roadside. **47** And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" **48** And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **49** And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; rise, he is calling you." **50** And throwing off his mantle he sprang up and came to Jesus. **51** And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Master,^[b] let me receive my sight." **52** And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way. Mark 10: 46-52

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

29 And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. **30** And behold, two blind men sitting by the roadside, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out,^[c] "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" **31** The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent; but they cried out the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" **32** And Jesus stopped and called them, saying, "What do you want me to

do for you?" **33** They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." **34** And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they received their sight and followed him. Matthew 20: 29-34.

Words such as these were well calculated to reconcile the Apostles with one another; uncontrolled and disappointed ambition was put to shame by the living example of their Master; fraternal charity came to life again when brought ([Page 114](#)) into contact with such a great love as this. They continue their journey, and from now on they think more of the fate which threatens Him, a fate they also must share, and they are content to leave to God the care of assigning to each of them his place in the glory of the kingdom.

Traversing the foot of the hills they passed the beautiful spring at Douka (Ain Duk) and came to the even larger fountain (Ata Sultan) which supplied ancient Jericho with water. At this time the Canaanite fortress conquered by Josue had scarcely any inhabitants, but its site, which has

Cf. Revue Biblique, 1909, pp. 270 ff.; 1910, pp. 405 ff.

discovered, was then well known. The way that led to the new Jericho, built in ornate fashion by Herod the Great, passed through the ancient city. The new city had been built near the entrance to the precipitous valley of the brook Kelt, and in that valley Herod had collected the mountain streams in order to water his pleasure city. As Jesus was entering there, about half an hour after passing through ancient Jericho,

(There is a temptation to make use of the two Jerichos in order to bring Luke, who places the miracle before, into harmony with Matthew and Mark, who place it after the entry into Jericho. But the miracle must have been performed near the Jericho of Herod. Mark and Matthew, however, may have been thinking of the ancient Jericho when they wrote 'after.' Luke, who laid emphasis on the enthusiasm stirred up in the Jericho where Jesus stayed, could only place the miracle 'before' His entry. However, in this case as in so many others, it is the miracle that is of chief importance, not its chronological position.)

a large crowd collected behind Him, telling each other His name and enthusiastically applauding Him. In the midst of all this a blind man began to cry out: 'Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!' St. Mark, who had probably been acquainted with him among the Christian brethren, tells us that his name was Bartimeus. No doubt he was sitting by the roadside along with another blind man, for it was the practice of these

unfortunates to go about in pairs. This other man was also cured, but he remains unidentified.?

(Matthew is alone in speaking of two blind men. Whilst fully admitting the cure of two, we must recognize that the second is a mere supernumerary who is deemed to have said the same thing as Bartimzeus because he shared his sentiments.)

Bartimeus, eager and impulsive by character, cried out so loudly that he was ordered to be silent. But he only cried out still more loudly : ‘ Son of David, have mercy on me !’ Jesus had already gone by ; but touched by the misfortune and also by the great confidence of the man, He stopped and ([Page 115](#)) said : ‘Call him !’ The crowd, fickle as ever, now becomes interested in the blind man. ‘ Courage!’ they say; ‘Arise! He calleth thee.’ Then, far from groping his way forward so as to make his blindness noticeable and thus inspire pity, the man throws off his cloak so as to be freer, leaps forward, and with the surest of instincts finds himself at the feet of Jesus. In order to give him an opportunity of voicing his faith publicly, our Savior asks him; ‘What wilt thou that I should do to thee?’ But what could a blind man desire? ‘Master, that I may see.’ Jesus says to him: ‘Go; thy faith hath saved thee.’ Immediately he was cured and followed Jesus, his gratitude breaking out into praise of God, so that the curiosity of the crowd changed into religious awe,

Jesus in the house of Zacheus (226).

Jesus and Zacchaeus

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** And there was a man named Zacchae'us; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. **3** And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. **4** So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. **5** And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchae'us, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." **6** So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. **7** And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." **8** And Zacchae'us stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold." **9** And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19: 1-10.

Then Jesus entered Jericho. Along the streets and in the open places there were trees, planted in that haphazard fashion which is a not unpleasing feature of oriental cities,

ancient and modern alike. To this day beautiful dark green sycamores grow at Jericho and the roots of these trees, rising out of the ground and supporting the trunk like flying buttresses, almost touch the lower branches!

Now the head of the publicans' office at Jericho, a Jew named Zacheus, was desirous of seeing the face of this Jesus whose name flew from mouth to mouth in the crowd. He was a small man, and so, stirred by the common enthusiasm which makes all things permissible, he clambered up a sycamore at the risk of being made the butt of joking comments. A publican up a sycamore tree! Jesus also raised His eyes to look at him, but it was only to say kindly : ' Zacheus, come down quickly, for this day I must abide in thy house.' An incorrigible prophet was this Jesus! Behold Him now choosing a sinner's house for His lodging even while He is in the act of being saluted as Son of David, or in other words as Messiah. There was a sign of murmuring and we can guess from whom it came.

Zacheus, the publican, was deeply touched by this kindness and showed himself to be a man of feeling. Even before our Saviour had sat down at his table, Zacheus stood at the entrance of his house and showed unwillingness to ([Page 116](#)) receive Him into the dwelling of a rich sinner. Confident of understanding the wishes of his guest, for Jesus had made no secret about what He desired, the publican declared that he gave half of his possessions to the poor. There were plenty of opportunities for defrauding others in his work ; and even without actually committing fraud, how easy it was to demand a little more than the fixed sum under the pretext of covering oneself against risks! Therefore, if he had done wrong to any one, he would make good the injustice, and he condemned himself to the penalty assigned to theft; he would restore fourfold.

This was the Roman law for open theft. Hebrew law imposed this penalty for cattle thieving (Exod. xxii, 1).

The Master approves this action. He was indeed bringing salvation into that house. A son of Israel, who has compromised himself by his dealings with Gentiles, becomes a genuine son of Abraham once more. In reply to the murmurings, perhaps being uttered by those who were just coming in, Jesus now declares, as He had formerly declared about that other publican, Levi-Matthew?

32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Luke 5: 32.

'The Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost.' The Semi-Pelagians appealed to this incident of Zachzus to support their contention that the first movement in the work of salvation must proceed from the human soul. But would Zacheus have climbed up the sycamore unless his heart had first been touched by the presence of Jesus, who had come to Jericho in order to convert him? It is God, then, who begins the good work, but it is for us to follow His call as Zachzus did. This friend of Our Saviour is honored in France as a saint at the sanctuary of Rocamadour.

The parable of the pounds or talents (227).

The Parable of the Ten Pounds

11 As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. **12** He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive kingly power^[a] and then return. **13** Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten pounds^[b] and said to them, 'Trade with these till I come.' **14** But his citizens hated him and sent an embassy after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' **15** When he returned, having received the kingly power^[c] he commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. **16** The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made ten pounds more.' **17** And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' **18** And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made five pounds.' **19** And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' **20** Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your pound, which I kept laid away in a napkin; **21** for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.' **22** He said to him, 'I will condemn you out of your own mouth, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? **23** Why then did you not put my money into the bank, and at my coming I should have collected it with interest?' **24** And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the pound from him, and give it to him who has the ten pounds.' **25** (And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten pounds!') **26** 'I tell you, that to every one who has will more be given; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. **27** But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me.'"

Luke 19: 11-28

The Parable of the Talents

14 "For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; **15** to one he gave five talents^[b] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. **16** He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with

them; and he made five talents more. **17** So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. **18** But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. **19** Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. **20** And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' **21** His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' **22** And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' **23** His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' **24** He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; **25** so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' **26** But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? **27** Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. **28** So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. **29** For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.^[c] **30** And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'

Matthew 25: 14-30.

(Matthew speaks of talents, Luke of mine (pounds). As usual, Matthew has preserved only what is essential in the teaching of Jesus. Luke, whom we follow, has kept its historical setting which suits the circumstances and brings the teaching out in relief.)

People came in freely after the meal, and probably during the course of the meal also ; this was the custom then, and it is still observed in the East. Moreover, the curiosity aroused by Jesus would have excused breaches of custom even had they taken place. There was a feeling of great ([Page 117](#)) agitation. He whom men were already saluting as the Messiah would not go up to Jerusalem like an ordinary pilgrim. Doubtless there was to occur some spectacular manifestation of divine intervention ; the kingdom of God would be proclaimed. But Jesus was determined to say once more that it was not His intention to set Himself up as a political Messiah, to start a revolution in order to seat Himself on the throne of Israel. King He was indeed by right of birth, but He was to disappear before receiving the crown from His Father ; those who professed to be His disciples would have to show loyalty to Him during an absence that was to last long. In order to impress this truth upon His hearers, who were so slow to understand it, He made use of a parable addressed to people of the higher classes who mixed in politics and public affairs.

In these circles it was remembered that the first Herod had been to Rome to ask the Senate to grant him the title of King of Judea. His son Archelaus, whom he had nominated in his will as his successor, had not dared to assume the crown without first receiving permission at Rome from the emperor Augustus. When he went thither he was followed by some of the Jews who were resolved to oppose his claim.

Josephus, *Antiquities*, XVII, ix, 3-6.

Jesus could, therefore, without causing any surprise to people who knew what had happened, propose the case of a man of noble birth setting out for a distant country in the hope of being there invested with the royal dignity and returning as king. This heir to the throne was Himself. What were his servants to do in the meantime ? Had they nothing to do but await his speedy return? No; for perhaps his return might be delayed. They were therefore to look after their master's interests, and even work to increase his goods. Ten of them had received a mina each with instructions to turn it to good account. Not that Jesus is thinking of recommending letting out money at interestHe who had said that we should lend looking for nothing thereby;

35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return;^[c] and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish.
Luke 6: 35.

but He speaks to publicans in a language they can well understand. What was more suitable in the circumstances was a hard-working fidelity to their master, in view of the fact that the enemies of the prince were working against him in his absence. Everyone knew that Jesus also had adversaries who were determined to do all in their power to thwart Him. But a parable is not an allegory, and ([Page 118](#)) the Master does not lay emphasis on this passionate opposition of His enemies ; He leaves it in the secrecy where it works. On his return with royal power, the new sovereign's first care is concerned with his servants! The first says simply: 'Lord, thy mina hath gained ten.' The king expresses his thanks and, being now at liberty to dispose of all the offices of state, entrusts the government of ten cities to his servant. Another has gained five minae, and is set over five cities. We are left to form for ourselves an idea of what happened to the rest by comparison with the first two. Finally, the last of them comes forward, and the suggestion here is that he has not dared to make up his mind between his prince and the party of opposition. He has not wasted his mina; he has taken no risks and has tied it up in his handkerchief. He has done nothing for his master, but neither has he endangered his interests! All the same he is fully aware that he is not blameless, but instead of modestly excusing himself, he throws the blame on

the king: 'I feared thee, because thou art a stern man. Thou takest up what thou didst not lay down, and thou reapest that which thou didst not sow.' In truth he goes beyond all limits. On what are his complaints founded? He makes it look as though nothing had been given him. The king, therefore, has the right to be stern, but he merely orders the mina to be taken away from the servant and, disdaining to take it back, he gives it to the most deserving of the others.

The punishment of his enemies is harsher : he orders them to be put to death before him. With that sentence the parable comes to a close, a sentence which terminates the period of opposition and inaugurates his kingship. The stage is now set; the enemy is duly warned, and the disciples are encouraged to do their duty in their Lord's absence, assured of His return and of their reward. Then Jesus turns His steps towards Jerusalem.

II. SATURDAY BEFORE PALM SUNDAY

The anointing at Bethany (228).

The Anointing at Bethany

3 And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the jar and poured it over his head. **4** But there were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment thus wasted? **5** For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii,^[a] and given to the poor." And they reproached her. **6** But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. **7** For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you will, you can do good to them; but you will not always have me. **8** She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burying. **9** And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." Mark 14: 3-9

The Anointing at Bethany

6 Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, **7** a woman came up to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head, as he sat at table. **8** But when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? **9** For this ointment might have been sold for a large sum, and given to the poor." **10** But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. **11** For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. **12** In pouring this ointment on my body she has done it to

prepare me for burial. **13** Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.” **Matthew 26: 6-13**

Mary Anoints Jesus

12 ^[a]Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Laz'arus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **2** There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Laz'arus was one of those at table with him. **3** Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. **4** But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, **5** “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii^[b] and given to the poor?” **6** This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. **7** Jesus said, “Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. **8** The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

The Plot to Kill Lazarus

9 When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Laz'arus, whom he had raised from the dead. **10** So the chief priests planned to put Laz'arus also to death, **11** because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. **John 12: 1-11.**

Had we only the first three gospels we might conclude that Jesus went straight from Jericho to Jerusalem without ([Page 119](#)) interruption. We have already seen how their summary record of His journey from Galilee is restricted to one main route (save for the occasional departures from that route which in our opinion are to be found in the gospel of St. Luke), and how they mention no stopping-place except Jericho, whence Jesus departs for Jerusalem. St. John, however, has informed us of another halt between Jericho and the Holy City. Jesus had to pass through Bethany, and He stayed there on the sixth day before the Pasch when a feast was held in His honor. This sixth day before the Pasch was a Saturday, the Pasch falling on Friday that year, as we shall see later. Now Jesus would not have walked for five or six hours on a Sabbath day ; it is therefore probable that He left Jericho on Friday and spent the night in the open, as caravans often do before entering cities, so as to arrive at Bethany on Saturday morning without exceeding the distance allowed on the Sabbath, that is, about six furlongs.

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away; **Acts 1: 12.**

The fact that it was the day of rest did not stand in the way of people having a somewhat carefully prepared meal on the evening of the Sabbath, as we have said before.

(Cf. p. 57, above. Matthew and Mark have recorded this meal later. In their narrative it partly explains Judas' betrayal ; hence they have interposed it between the perplexity of the priests concerning the means of laying hold of Jesus and their bargain with Judas.)

According to Mark and Matthew, this repast took place on the evening of the Sabbath day in the house of Simon the leper: doubtless a leper cured by Jesus, but still known by the title his former disease had conferred on him. St. John omits all mention of him, but tells us that Lazarus, the man raised from the dead, was one of those who sat down at table. He makes Martha also appear as the housewife attending to the arrangements of the feast, while Mary later enters on the scene with the perfume. Judas, too, is mentioned. It looks very much as though the fourth evangelist had the intention here of revealing the names of persons hitherto unknown outside Palestine, while he refrains from repeating the name of Simon already mentioned by other evangelists.

(We follow, therefore, the narrative of John, supplementing it with that of Mark. There are no special details furnished by Matthew.)

The presence of these three friends of Jesus at the feast leads us to think that it was their house at which He was staying while at Bethany, and that Simon had (Page 120) invited them to his house along with Jesus, either out of politeness, or perhaps because they were friends of his.

The meal had already begun when Mary, the sister of Lazarus, took a pound of scented spikenard of the purest quality, and, following the customary usage, anointed the head of Jesus. Then, as there was still much left, she poured it profusely over His feet, breaking the alabaster vessel so as to pour out every drop of the perfume. So copiously did she anoint His feet that she felt it incumbent on her to wipe them, and this she did with her hair. The odor of the scented oil filled all the house.

Amongst the disciples present was Judas Iscariot, the one to whom the Master had given charge of the scanty common purse. Avaricious by disposition and uneasy about the future, Judas was laying money aside. Such a piece of extravagance as this was shocking to him. A perfume that might have been sold for three hundred pence! But he hides his inward feelings and appeals to what he considers Jesus's weak point in saying that this perfume ought to have been sold and the money given to the poor. For once the Master seems less concerned to help the poor than to defend this noble woman against such a hypocrite. 'Let her alone,' He said. 'You wonder why she has not sold this perfume ? It was so that she could keep it for the day of My burial.' Her mindful heart had indeed been touched by a foreboding to which the others had been insensible, and she had anointed her beloved Master's body before the time. It was a gesture so full of beauty, for it was inspired by light from above, that Jesus declared in solemn fashion: 'Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her.' The prophecy is fulfilled in every pulpit from which the Passion is preached.

As for the poor, Jesus who is about to die can do nothing more for them Himself, but He leaves the care of them to His disciples, At present, however, He would like to move their hearts with the tender and sad feelings which have touched the heart of Mary: 'The poor you have always with you ; but Me you have not always.' Never before had Jesus so strongly declared the imminence of His death. Already He saw Himself lying embalmed by the loving hands of women... .

Judas says to himself that it is useless to count any further ([Page 121](#)) on Jesus; He is lost, and the only thing to do is to get what benefit one can from the situation. Stirred to resentment by the rebuke he has received, the idea of betraying his Master enters his mind. It was only very gently that Jesus had reproved him, but the idea of His sober judgment being set on one side because of the feelings of a woman! His base soul measures everything by its worth in cash. No longer does he believe in his Master, whom, it may be, he has never really loved: a leader who has let Himself be carried away by vain dreams, but who is now a prey to discouragement. This is where Judas begins to play his part: it is he who will be the traitor.

III. PALM SUNDAY

The Messianic entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (229).

29 When he drew near to Beth'phage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, **30** saying, "Go into the village opposite, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat; untie it and bring it here. **31** If any one asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this, 'The Lord has need of it.'" **32** So those who were sent went away and found it as he had told them. **33** And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" **34** And they said, "The Lord has need of it." **35** And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their garments on the colt they set Jesus upon it. **36** And as he rode along, they spread their garments on the road. **37** As he was now drawing near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, **38** saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" **39** And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." **40** He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

41 And when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, **42** saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes. **43** For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will cast up a bank about you and surround you, and hem you in on every side, **44** and dash you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another in you; because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Luke 19: 29-44

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

11 And when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Beth'phage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, **2** and said to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat; untie it and bring it. **3** If any one says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" **4** And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door out in the open street; and they untied it. **5** And those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" **6** And they told them what Jesus had said; and they let them go. **7** And they brought the colt to Jesus, and threw their garments on it; and he sat upon it. **8** And many spread their garments on the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. **9** And those who went before and those who followed cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! **10** Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!"

11 And he entered Jerusalem, and went into the temple; and when he had looked round at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. Mark 11: 1-11a

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

21 And when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Beth'phage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, **2** saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. **3** If any one says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and he will send them immediately." **4** This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5

"Tell the daughter of Zion,

Behold, your king is coming to you,

humble, and mounted on an ass,

and on a colt, the foal of an ass."

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; **7** they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. **8** Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **9** And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"^[a] **10** And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" **11** And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee."

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. **15** But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant; **16** and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read,

'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings

thou hast brought perfect praise'?"

Matthew 21; 1-11, 14-16

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

12 The next day a great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. **13** So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" **14** And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written,

15

"Fear not, daughter of Zion;

behold, your king is coming,

sitting on an ass's colt!"

16 His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him. **17** The crowd that had been with him when he called Laz'arus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness. **18** The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. **19** The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see that you can do nothing; look, the world has gone after him."

John 12; 12-19.

The next day Jesus prepared for His entry into Jerusalem. Knowing that He was at Bethany, a considerable crowd of people had come out to meet Him, too impatient to await the arrival of this famous rabbi in the Holy City. They also wanted to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. On seeing Lazarus, their enthusiasm increased, to the exasperation of the chief priests. These had already made up their minds to do Jesus to death, but now they resolved to make away with Lazarus also ; he would not rise again, once Jesus was dead.

In spite of the chief priests, the number of those who wished to applaud the Master by thus accompanying Him into Jerusalem increased. On the occasion of the bringing of the first-fruits

Mishnah, Bikkurim, III, 3. Vol II.- 1

up to the Temple, it was the custom of the people of the city to go out to meet the pilgrims and to return with them in a joyful and clamorous procession. Musical instruments were played and hymns chanted. On this occasion the leaders of the priesthood: kept sullenly aloof, The Galilaans who accompanied Jesus and the inhabitants of the city shared views with one another, and on the spur of the moment an escort was formed for Jesus.

It was perhaps because He was unwilling to compromise His ([Page 122](#)) friends in any way that He had not asked at Bethany for the lowly beast on which it was His purpose to make His entry into the city, The village of Bethphage lay on His road, somewhere on the slopes of the Mount of Olives between Bethany and Jerusalem. Thither He sent two of His disciples with the rather strange mission to bring Him an ass's colt, which they would find tied up at the entrance to the village, and they were to bring it without asking any one's leave. It is probable that, in His thoughtfulness for others, He thus provided the owner with the opportunity of disclaiming all responsibility before the authorities, though He knew that He could count on the owner's consent, for He said to

His disciples: ‘ If any man shall ask you: Why do you loose him? You shall say: Because the Lord hath need of him and will send him back at once.’ Everything happened as Jesus had foretold. They found an ass’s colt tied up at a door in the street and loosed it. When surprise was shown at this, the disciples related what their Master had bidden them to say and were allowed to depart with the colt.

It was the object of Jesus to fulfill a well-known prophecy of the prophet Zacharias,

The Coming Ruler of God’s People

9

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you;

triumphant and victorious is he,

humble and riding on an ass,

on a colt the foal of an ass.

Zechariah 9: 9.

introduced here by St. Matthew with a few words from Isaias which are intended to diminish the note of triumph which is conveyed in the passage from Zacharias. Instead of that prophet’s: ‘ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for gladness, O daughter of Jerusalem !’ St. Matthew, realizing that the chief value of the imposing imagery used by the prophets is to bring out the spiritual lesson they teach,

See Pascal et les prophéties messianiques, Rev. Biblique, 1906, pp. 533-560.

thinking also of the secret hostility which filled the hearts of the princes of the daughter of Sion, omits the invitation to rejoice and writes merely: ‘Tell ye the daughter of Sion,’ in the more modest fashion of Isaias.

11

Behold, the Lord has proclaimed

to the end of the earth:

Say to the daughter of Zion,

“Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.” **Isaias 62: 11.**

Further, Zacharias had said: ‘ Behold thy king cometh to thee, just and victorious, humble and riding upon an ass, and on a colt, the foal of asses.’ Here again St. Matthew suppresses what gives too glorious an aspect; all that he leaves is that the king is meek and riding upon an ass. Therefore, Jesus who up to this always declined the title of Messiah, except secretly and from His most faithful followers, was here giving His approval to what was in effect a ([Page 123](#)) Messianic entry into the Holy City. But the time had come when He was about to declare before the Sanhedrin that He was indeed the Messiah, and He now allows the multitude to hail Him by that title,

It was also His desire that the pomp of His entry should be so unassuming as to give no cause of offense to the Roman authorities, and that it should have nothing of a riotous or revolutionary character, A good deal has been written about the way in which Orientals are said to regard the ass as a noble animal. But a Roman passing by on a well trained horse, helmet on head and lance in hand, would have been more likely to smile at what would seem to him a ludicrous procession or masquerade, a caricature of the triumphant ascent to the Capitol. Jesus, however, accepted this humble homage, humble and meek King as He was ; these good folk were doing the best that lay in their power. Those who were nearest laid their garments upon the ass’s colt

(St. Matthew says that there was a she-ass also, the mother of the foal, which would not have come without her.)

to do duty for a saddle, others spread their cloaks upon the ground along with green branches cut from the fields, while they carried branches of palm in their hands. Then surrounding Jesus, some running ahead, others following behind, and all crying: ‘Hosanna! Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David ! Hosanna in the highest !’

The Coming of Elijah

9 And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of man should have risen from the dead. **10** So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant. **11** And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Eli’jah must come?” **12** And he said to them, “Eli’jah does come first to restore all things; and how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?

13 But I tell you that Eli'jah has come,^[c] and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him." Mark 9: 9 - f.

Hosanna, meaning 'Save, then!' was an acclamation devoted by custom for use in processions. Thus they were hailing the Son of David, the King of Israel, the Messiah whom they so ardently desired.

The Pharisees, though they were powerless to forestall and to check this popular outburst, at any rate found this advantage in it, that they could make Jesus responsible for the disorder: 'Master, rebuke Thy disciples.' But the Master is unwilling to give the lie to those who thus believe in Him; they are only carrying out God's design: 'If these shall hold their peace, the very stones will cry out.'

39 And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." **40** He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." Luke 19: 39 ff.

9 The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see that you can do nothing; look, the world has gone after him." John 12: 19.

See also

Jesus and Peter

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." **16** A second time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." **17** He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.^[d] **18** Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go." **19** (This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God.) And after this he said to him, "Follow me."

Matthew 21: 15 ff.

Amid this general enthusiasm His enemies are discouraged and admit with bad grace: 'Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold the whole world is gone after Him.'

Nevertheless Jesus was very far removed from the (Page 124) triumphant sentiments of the victorious generals of antiquity, After mounting to the Capitol, these generals would descend to see the slaughter of the kings they had conquered, But in this case it was Jesus Himself who was to be the victim, and the city of Jerusalem that He had come to save was to suffer with Him. As He saw spread out before Him, still fresh with the brilliance of their great white stones, the palaces, the ramparts, the Temple of the Lord shining with gold, and all that holy Sion where hatred and treachery awaited Him, He burst into tears. Many a saint has wept with Him in reading this lament:

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

41 And when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, 42 saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes. 43 For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will cast up a bank about you and surround you, and hem you in on every side, 44 and dash you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another in you; because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Luke 19: 41 ff.

'Ah! if thou also hadst known on this day that which was necessary for thy peace! But now it is hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee when thy enemies shall cast a rampart about thee, and compass thee round about, and straighten thee on every side, and dash thee to the ground and thy children who are in thee, and shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.' It is the ever repeated refrain of unrequited love. Thou, thou, ever thou! It is not that Jesus is looking over Jerusalem to see the place where He is to die. His eyes are not fixed upon the site of Golgotha. What weighs upon His mind is the vision of a people delivered over to madness, factions on every side, divisions healed for a time by a despairing rage against a determined enemy who is tightening his toils about the city and advancing to attack ; it is the wailing of children crushed under the falling stones, the burning torch thrown into the Temple, God's worship coming to an end in those sacred courts. As we pause to-day for a moment at the place where Jesus wept, our hearts turn straight to Calvary, but our eyes are irresistibly drawn towards the shining splendor of the Mosque of Omar, lying peacefully within the ancient enclosure walls of the Temple as though confident in its beauty. It bears witness to the end of the old covenant even more than did the old altar lying in its ruins on the site now occupied by the Mosque. And even if, by some impossibility, it were delivered up to the destroying hammers of the Jews, who now mourn against its walls, so that they might

build once more their Temple, they would not dare to shed again the blood of victims so near to Calvary, where flowed the blood of Him whom they caused to be sacrificed. Oxen and ([Page 125](#)) lambs have nothing to fear from them. Mankind will no longer call for any sacrifice of blood except that of the cross.

The death of the Messiah is the way to His glory (230).

Some Greeks Wish to See Jesus

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. **21** So these came to Philip, who was from Beth-sa'ida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." **22** Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew went with Philip and they told Jesus. **23** And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. **25** He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. **26** If any one serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him.

Jesus Speaks about His Death

27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour. **28** Father, glorify thy name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." **29** The crowd standing by heard it and said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." **30** Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. **31** Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; **32** and I, when I am lifted up^g from the earth, will draw all men to myself." **33** He said this to show by what death he was to die. **34** The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains for ever. How can you say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" **35** Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. **36** While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

John 12: 20-36.

At length Jesus reached Jerusalem and entered the Temple enclosure whither the multitude followed Him. Gentiles might enter the outer courts, but they were forbidden under pain of death to enter the inner courts.

(Recently one of the tablets containing a Greek inscription prohibiting their entry was discovered.)

Gradually the enthusiasm of the morning waned. All departed to seek food. In the evening Jesus was probably in the Temple once more, and again, as the hero of the day, He was surrounded by eager listeners ; but there was little or no excitement. Perhaps He would now give some watchword, explain His plans, or show what sort of mission He thought Himself called to perform. Some Gentiles were present, men sympathetic towards Judaism and already attached to the worship of the one God, proselytes who had come to adore the Lord during the feast, sharing in the prayers if not in the rites of the Jews. Through the instrumentality of Philip and Andrew—both hailing from Bethsaida of Galilee which was bordering on the Gentile countries, and both bearing Greek names—they were able to satisfy their desire to see Jesus. In this way they were privileged to be present at a veritable revelation of the manner in which Jesus understood the part He was to play.

His opening words were of a character to encourage them: ‘The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified.’ It pleased Him to assume that little-known title of Son of Man, but it was indeed as Messiah that He was going to glory. Then, immediately, He compares Himself to a grain of wheat : if it be not sown, if it die not in the soil, it cannot bring forth fruit. Is it necessary, then, that He should die? Must all anticipate the same fate who resolve to follow Him? Yes, for we must hate our lives, that is, we must accept death, if we would gain eternal life. Thus He shows that He has no idea of reigning now, but is thinking only of life in the world to come. Here He summons those who are willing to follow Him, for the true way ([Page 126](#)) of serving Him is to imitate Him. It is not He who will reward His followers but His Father; the reward also, then, will be in that mysterious world which is to come. But the near approach of death makes nature tremble, and Jesus confesses that His soul is troubled. Will He therefore cry out for mercy and say: ‘ Father, save Me from this hour?’ No, for it is by His own free choice that He has come to this painful moment, in the knowledge that by doing so He gives glory to His Father. Hence, He prays: ‘ O Father, glorify Thy name!’

The miracles Jesus had worked had already displayed the glory of that divine name; accordingly a voice from Heaven now declared: ‘I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.’ Not that the voice came for the sake of Jesus; He already knew His Father’s will and command. The Father had spoken that others might give credit to His Son. But God’s word is differently understood by men according to the different dispositions in which it finds them. The Jews were already familiar with this ‘ daughter of the voice,’ as they called it, which resounded from heaven. The best disposed among them said to one another: ‘An angel spoke to Him.’ Others merely thought it was the sound of thunder, for it was the springtime when thunder is sometimes heard,

(Thunder is also heard in Palestine during the autumn, but never in summer or winter.)

and for the Hebrews thunder was the voice of God. But on this occasion there was some astonishment at the way in which the sound of the thunder came as a response to the Messiah's appeal to His Father. Jesus proceeded to explain to them what was the meaning of this voice.

God was about to judge the world, not in thunder and lightning as on Sinai, but up in heaven, and His judgment would consist in casting out Satan, whom the Jews themselves called the ruler of the world. The defeat of Satan had already begun;

18 And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Luke 10: 18

20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Luke 11: 20.

it would be complete when Jesus, lifted up from the earth, would be in a position to draw all men to Himself.

(St. Augustine has seen the objection to this, based on the fact that human nature is in a perpetual state of conflict with evil. But although, before our redemption, Satan was master within us, yet now, though he still attacks, his attack comes from without, We can now meet his darts with the armor of the Apostle. And if we are wounded our Healer is nigh.)

But in what way was He to be lifted up? The (Page 127) phrase was not so obscure for the Jews as it is for us; it could refer to being raised on a cross as well as being lifted up in dignity. And after all that Jesus had said about His death, they must have concluded that He was speaking of His being lifted up for execution. The crowd, at any rate, was under no misapprehension ; but the saying caused the listeners further surprise and doubt: ' We have heard,' they said, 'from the Law (meaning here the Sacred Scriptures, including the Prophets and the Psalms) that the Christ abideth forever; and how sayest Thou that the Son of Man must be lifted up?' They are aware that Jesus is referring to Himself under this title of Son of Man, but what does He really mean by it? They are not accustomed to regard it as a synonym for the Messiah. Not

all of them have read Daniel. And even in Daniel the Son of Man comes down from the clouds, and that is not true of Jesus. They do not know what to think.

Here, as formerly, this presentiment of ignominious suffering brings stupefaction to the minds of the hearers. The crowd can hardly credit its own enthusiasm of that very morning, for now it begins to doubt Him whom it had applauded as the Messiah. Thus was Israel always; as in the days of Osee (Hosea), ‘like the cloud at daybreak, and like the morning dew that passeth away.’

9

I will destroy you, O Israel;

Who can help you? Osee (Hosea) 13: 9

Night was now falling.

(A conjecture based on Mark 11: 11)

11 And he entered Jerusalem, and went into the temple; and when he had looked round at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The last rays of the setting sun were shining on the summit of the Mount of Olives and lighting up the mountains of Moab in the distance. This provided Jesus with His text: ‘Yet a little while the Light is among you’; the Light was He Himself, for had not Isaiah said that the Messiah was to be the Light of the Nations?

6

“I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness,

I have taken you by the hand and kept you;

I have given you as a covenant to the people,

a light to the nations, Isaiah 42: 6

6

he says:

“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant

to raise up the tribes of Jacob

and to restore the preserved of Israel;

I will give you as a light to the nations,

that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

To believe in that Light was to become the children of light, with power to discern God’s mysterious purpose in the Messiah’s death. Those who did not believe would be

shrouded in the ever-growing darkness, and would consequently walk without knowing whither they were going. As a result of these grave words, no one ventured to offer Jesus hospitality in Jerusalem ; He therefore withdrew to Bethany

11 And he entered Jerusalem, and went into the temple; and when he had looked round at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. **Mark 11: 11**

17 And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there. **Matthew 21: 17**

with His disciples, sure of being welcomed there by the children of light. ([Page 128](#))